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Fatal crash marks 'one of saddest days' of career: Weighill

Police chief calls incident 'senseless.'

Two in custody in connection to crash of stolen truck that killed two teenagers

MORGAN MODJESKI
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Saskatoon's police chief says the deaths of two high school students in a collision involving a stolen truck is one of the most difficult tragedies of his career.

"This is probably one of the saddest days since I've been the chief of police in the city of Saskatoon," Clive Weighill said on Tuesday, calling Monday night's crash "senseless" and "meaningless."

The truck's female driver is suspected of being drunk at the time of the collision, which occurred about 8 p.m. at the intersection of Avenue M and 22nd Street West.

Police say the stolen pickup truck fled a patrol car and ran a stop sign, striking two vehicles and pinning one of them against Harder's Family Wellness Centre.

Two 17-year-olds in the pinned car, a boy and a girl who were students at Bethlehem Catholic High School, were killed.

A 16-year-old girl, who had been in the car with the other victims, was taken to hospital with life-threatening injuries. Occupants of the third vehicle were treated at the scene and refused further care.

Weighill said the patrol car had followed the truck, which had been reported stolen from Avenue C, for several blocks before activating its emergency lights. The pickup was then driven at what Weighill called "a high rate of speed."

However, Weighill said a police video shows the cruiser did not pursue the truck.

"It definitely was not a high-speed chase," the chief stressed.

"Our officer's vehicle slowed right down and did not pursue that vehicle, because he could see that this was not going to end well if there was a pursuit."

Two suspects who had been in the truck, a 21-year-old woman and a 17-year-old girl, are facing numerous charges. Police have alleged that alcohol was a factor in the crash.

"There will be charges to the effect of impaired driving causing death, criminal negligence causing death," Weighill said.

"We're still working our way through those."

Both suspects have previously been charged with stealing vehicles.

Weighill pleaded with the public to lock vehicles and remove their keys, noting that such thefts have jumped 28 per cent in Saskatoon since the beginning of the year.

Saskatoon Police Chief Clive Weighill told reporters on Tuesday that the crash, which killed two teenagers, was one of the most tragic of his career. Inset: The crash scene at Avenue M and 22nd Street West, which Weighill described as "horrific." MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

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Standards needed?

Overworked staff contributed to deaths, argues child advocate

Saskatchewan's children's advocate says high caseloads for protection workers and poor communication between Health and Social Services staff contributed to two child deaths.

"This is coming from the workers that assessments are not done because there wasn't time, that we weren't able to communicate because we just didn't have time," Bob Pringle said Tuesday after releasing his annual report.

The children's advocate says some workers have more than 40 cases.

This has been a persistent problem: Pringle's report notes the issue was first identified in a 1998 review and again in a 2010 submission to the Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review, which recommended the province establish caseload standards.

Pringle's report details the deaths of two girls, seven and 16 months old, who were born to mothers struggling with addictions, violence and mental illness.

Social Services Minister June Draude says caseloads are going down, but it can be tough to set a standard because cases can be complex.

"We know that children have different needs, and when you take into consideration the geography in our province, it's really difficult to say there should be just this many caseloads per worker," said Draude.

Draude says 80 per cent of child protection workers have between 15 and 20 cases. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Danielle Bergen, 20, hails from Drake, Sask., and is a semifinalist in this year's international Extreme Huntress competition. Inset: Bergen favours a bow and arrow for her hunting needs. COURTESY SHAUNTI BERGEN

Sask. shooter aims to be ultimate Huntress

Contest semifinalist. Twenty-year-old hopes to spread love of the hunt, great outdoors

JACOB MORGAN
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Danielle Bergen might be the coolest young woman with a bow and arrow since Katniss Everdeen.

And she has the chance to participate in her own Hunger Games if she gets enough votes in the international Extreme Huntress competition.

"I want archery for women and young girls to explode," says the 20-year-old from the small town of Drake, about 150 kilometres southeast of Saskatoon.

But don't be fooled by Bergen's ability to down a black bear with a single shot; her motivations come from a humbler place than the sexy Hollywood franchise.

"I want them to fall in love with it just because of my passion for being in the outdoors," she said. "I have a deep respect for the animals that God created out there."

Her father, Al, gave her that appreciation at an early age. She was four the first time he took her to the bear stand and was immediately taken with the experience.

"I mean, shucks, in Saskatchewan we have some of the most gorgeous sunsets of any place in the world," said Bergen.

Al not only introduced his daughter to the sport but also taught her how to approach everything in life with hard work and determination.

"My goal is not to disappoint my dad. I want my dad to be smiling at me when I pull that trigger," she said.

Voting for Extreme Huntress closes June 1. Those with the top six scores, which combine public input and judging, travel to Hondo, Texas, for a televised skills contest.

Add your support

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Daleen Bosse

Dead woman's husband testifies car had unusually high kilometres

The husband of a Saskatoon woman found dead in 2008 says she was on her way to dinner with friends the night she was last seen alive.

Jeremiah Bosse testified how worried friends and family helped him search for weeks for Daleen Bosse.

He says they put up posters and checked parking garages for their missing car.

Bosse says they had done an oil change on the car on May 17, 2004, the day before Daleen went for dinner, and when it was found, he says it had an unusually high 400 extra kilometres on it.

Douglas Hales is charged with first-degree murder and indignity to human remains.

When Bosse was last seen, the 25-year-old mother was beginning her fourth year as a student at the University of Saskatchewan where she was studying to become a teacher like her parents.

CKOM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cosmopolitan Industries

Saskatoon company fined $14,000 for fall that seriously injured worker

A Saskatoon company has been fined $14,000 for a fall that seriously injured a worker.

Cosmopolitan Industries pleaded guilty in provincial court to one count under occupational health and safety laws.

The company admitted it failed to ensure that equipment that was being worked on was shut off.

The company was charged after a worker doing maintenance on a trash conveyor in January 2012 fell almost three metres to the ground.

One charge against the company was stayed.

Cosmopolitan Industries is a recycling company that provides opportunities for adults with mental and physical disabilities.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

For more local news visit metronews.ca

Everywhere a sign: City urges drivers to heed work zone warnings

Preventing injury.
New public awareness campaign to inform drivers of busy season as officials expect 40% jump in work zones

MORGAN MODJESKI
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With 2014 expected to be one of the busiest construction seasons in the city's history, officials are pleading with the public to heed warnings around work zones.

With a $50-million jump in funding through the city's Building Better Roads initiative, officials say there could be 110 active work zones in Saskatoon on a daily basis.

In order to try to prevent construction zone injury, the city launched the Respect Work Zones public awareness campaign on Tuesday, which they say will deliver a clear message to drivers through billboards and radio ads.

"We know that our crews experience hundreds of close calls and near misses every year," said Saskatoon's director of construction and design, Chris Hallam.

"Motorists ignoring signs and even entering work zones are events that are all too common and much too dangerous for our employees," he said.

"If everyone does their part, plans their commutes ahead of time and respect work zones, we'll be able to get through the 2014 construction season safely and successfully."

Jason Crone, a traffic signal technician with the city, said danger in the work zone is very real. Drivers sometimes rush, he said, or are just inattentive, making it a challenge to do his job.

"It's added more things to be concerned about," he said.

"I enjoy the work that I do and the people I work with and everyone cares about getting it done right, but we also care about getting home safely."

The campaign is expected to cost roughly $39,000.

A construction zone can be seen on Spadina Crescent East on Tuesday. JACOB MORGAN/METRO

Calls for a safer Trans-Canada Highway near Regina

Stuart Hall, front, rallies at the legislature on Tuesday to push for Trans-Canada Highway safety upgrades along with, from left at rear, Jensen Wilson, Randael Quiring and Bailey Willson. ROSS ROMANIUK/METRO

Students and other residents in a community east of Regina are calling for traffic signals on a stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway they say is dangerous.

The Greenall High School Community Council held a rally at the Saskatchewan legislature on Tuesday to urge the province to put traffic lights between Regina and Balgonie and to lower speed limits. The group says residents in Balgonie, where the school is located, and in three other towns along the route, have no safe ways to get onto or off the Trans-Canada without crossing multiple lanes of traffic going 110 kilometres an hour or faster.

Susan Fedyck, whose nephew Lane Campbell Antosh was killed on the highway stretch last August, wants changes.

"This highway is unsafe. There's too much traffic on it and we need to get something done now," said Fedyck.

"We can't bring Lane back. Our family's broken, devastated, but we can hopefully try and prevent this from happening to another family."

The statistics don't include four students whose vehicle was broadsided by a semi-trailer last December. All four survived with mostly minor injuries, and they say it's because the truck's driver was going 80 km/h instead of the posted speed limit.

Stuart Hall survived what he describes as the "unreal" crash.

"Most people are in accidents there with smaller vehicles, like getting hit by a car, and they don't walk away," said Hall, 15.

The provincial government plans to construct overpasses in the area during the next four to five years when it builds a $1.2-billion bypass around Regina.

The community council said traffic at intersections has been heavy enough to warrant signals since 2009. It's asking why signals can't be installed immediately if they're going to be put in anyway during the bypass construction.

Fedyck said overpasses are a great idea, though she's concerned about the wait for them.

"Again, it's too late for us," she said, "but there's going to be more people killed on that highway if something isn't done." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dismal numbers

680

There were 680 collisions along the stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway from Regina and Balgonie between 2005 and 2013, leaving 240 people hurt and eight dead.

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Ford didn't enter U.S. last week, reports say

Whereabouts remain a mystery. Toronto mayor's lawyer asks media to take a step back and 'let the man do his rehab'

Rob Ford did not officially enter the U.S. when he flew to Chicago last week bound for rehab, reports said Tuesday, but his lawyer insisted "100 per cent" that the Toronto mayor is getting in-patient substance-abuse treatment.

Ford's whereabouts remain a mystery, and lawyer Dennis Morris said they should stay that way.

"The media should, I don't know, put things on pause a little bit," Morris said in an interview. "Let the man do his rehab. Once he gets out we can just see how it worked."

Ford left home last week after announcing he was taking a leave of absence and suspending his re-election campaign to seek "immediate" help for alcohol abuse.

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford, seen leaving his home last Thursday, did not officially enter the U.S. when he flew to Chicago last week, reports said Tuesday, but his lawyer insisted Ford is getting treatment. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

He announced the decision hours after the Globe and Mail reported that a drug dealer had shown two of its reporters video of Ford allegedly smoking what was said to be crack, reportedly recorded days earlier in his sister's basement.

The Toronto Sun also published an audio recording of Ford at a bar making anti-gay remarks, using an ethnic slur and saying he would like to "jam" rival candidate Karen Stintz. Morris said at the time that it was not possible to know what was in the pipe seen in stills from the alleged new video.

He also said that the mayor flew to Chicago, but was not in a program in that city.

The Globe and Mail reported Tuesday that when Ford landed in Chicago he voluntarily withdrew his application to enter the country and quoted the consul general of Canada in Chicago as saying Ford "was not denied entry, per se."

Morris refused to say where Ford ended up, but said he is in a treatment facility.

"I can't comment other than saying 100 per cent," Morris said, adding that the mayor is "doing very well."

News that a video appeared to show Ford smoking crack cocaine broke nearly one year ago. When the scandal reared its head anew in November, following Ford's admission that he had smoked the drug, he said he was seeking help from a team of professionals, though did not elaborate other than to say he was exercising.

"I don't think he misled anybody at the time," Morris said Tuesday.

"But it wasn't the extensive help that he's getting now because as you saw, whatever help he received wasn't as in-patient, so now it's different."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Auditor general's report, in brief

Auditor general Michael Ferguson delivered his spring report to Parliament Tuesday. Here are the four things you need to know.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Overcrowding still a problem in prisons

The prison system has met its immediate need for cells, but has not figured out how to deal with the long-term problem of crowding, especially since federal law-and-order legislation promises to keep more people behind bars for longer periods. The audit says there is already overcrowding in some regions as prisoners are bunked two to a cell — and the problem could get worse.

Policing in First Nations isn't measuring up

The First Nations policing system is not working as intended and some of the police services fail to meet provincial policing legislation and standards. The audit found that First Nations don't have enough say in negotiating policing agreements. The Public Safety Department doesn't know whether First Nations police facilities, such as jails, police stations and accommodations, meet fire and building codes or provincial standards.

Public pension plans need more oversight

Public-service pension plans, covering public servants, Mounties and the military, are not regularly assessed for sustainability. The audit says the Treasury Board should assume a greater role in overseeing the plans, because prolonged low interest rates, lower-than-expected returns on assets and longer life spans could end up costing taxpayers billions.

StatsCan job data not giving a clear enough picture

The country's top survey on job vacancies is too vague and doesn't provide much value to governments and other users. Statistics Canada needs to better address the needs of those outside the federal government who use its data, especially when it comes to job-vacancy data. The auditors say the agency must find better ways to deliver data on small areas and smaller populations.

Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi delivers a statement at the headquarters of the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland. SALVATORE DI NOLFI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vatican releases sex abuse stats

848 priests defrocked. In last 10 years more than 3,400 cases have been reported

The Vatican released comprehensive statistics for the first time Tuesday on how it has disciplined priests accused of raping and molesting children, saying 848 priests have been defrocked and another 2,572 given lesser sanctions over the past decade.

The Vatican's UN ambassador in Geneva, Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, revealed the figures during a second day of grilling by a UN committee monitoring implementation of the UN treaty against torture.

Tomasi insisted the convention applied only inside the tiny Vatican City state. But he nevertheless released statistics about how the Holy See has adjudicated sex abuse cases globally, and significantly, he didn't dispute the committee's contention that sexual violence against children can be considered torture.

Tomasi said that since 2004, more than 3,400 credible cases of abuse had been referred to the Vatican, including 401 cases in 2013 alone.

Acknowledging the high number of priests sanctioned with the lesser punishment, Tomasi said it still amounted to disciplinary action and that the abuser is "just put in a place where he doesn't have any contact with the children." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Number of cases

The data provided to the UN committee Tuesday is the first ever year-by-year breakdown of how abuse cases were adjudicated by the papal court.

- Archbishop Silvano Tomasi said that over the last decade, 848 priests had been defrocked, or returned to the lay state by the pope. Another 2,572 were sentenced to a lifetime of penance and prayer or some other lesser sanction.

Pistorius accused of making 'sinister' remark

Oscar Pistorius was accused of making a "sinister" remark to a friend of Reeva Steenkamp in the courtroom Tuesday during a break at his murder trial.

Pistorius denied the allegation that he said to the close friend of the girlfriend he killed: "How can you sleep at night?"

The accusation by Kim Myers provided a bizarre twist during the trial of the world-famous double-amputee Olympian, who is facing 25 years to life in prison if convicted of premeditated murder for shooting dead Steenkamp, a 29-year-old model, at his home last year.

Pistorius, 27, denies murder and says he killed Steenkamp by mistake thinking she was an intruder when he shot her multiple times through a closed toilet door.

He also denied to reporters in the courtroom that he made any comment to Myers.

According to Myers' lawyer, she was approached by Pistorius and he made the remark to her in a "very sinister way." Attorney Ian Levitt said Myers was "shocked" and did not know what it referred to. Levitt said she found it "extremely disturbing." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kim Myers, friend of the late Reeva Steenkamp
ALON SKUY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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See that symbol? Use your Metro News app to scan the photo for a tour of Glenda Wagar and Pat Gerlinsky's ranch in Northern B.C., the scene of a potentially fatal sour gas leak in 2009.

On the edge of the Rocky Mountains in one of Canada's most remote corners, plains are marked by deep gorges B.C.'s Peace River country, which finds itself on the verge of a liquefied natural gas boom, a projected trillion-dollar requires fracking, a practice banned in three Canadian provinces. Over three days, Metro will look in depth

THE NEW FRONTIER

Glenda Wagar and her boyfriend Pat Gerlinsky visit with two-year-old colts and fillies on their farmland in northeastern B.C. on April 29. EMILY JACKSON/METRO IN VANCOUVER

High-pressure tactic

What the frick is fracking?

Fracking is shorthand for hydraulic fracturing, a method of extracting natural gas from unconventional sources, like shale rock formations, that were previously inaccessible through drilling methods.

The process involves drilling into the earth and injecting millions of litres of fluid — a mix of water, sand and chemicals — at a high pressure into shale rock to fracture the rock and release the gas trapped inside.

The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers explains how it works:

• A hole, called a wellbore, is drilled vertically into the ground. Once it reaches the depth of the shale rock, up to three kilometres below the surface, the drill turns horizontally into the rock.

• Steel tubes (casing) are inserted into the wellbore and secured by cement. The casing is meant to prevent the fracking fluid from leaking and contaminating drinking water aquifers.

• Fluid is injected into the hole at a high pressure to crack the shale rock and release the natural gas into the well. The cracks extend 50 to 100 metres into the rock.

Much of the controversy lies in the potential health risks from sour gas leaks to air pollution and contamination of drinking water. A study from the Council of Canadian Academies, an independent organization of scientists and other experts, concluded there isn't enough known about the impacts of fracking to declare it safe.

There are no documented cases of groundwater contamination from the fluid used in fracking in B.C. But a 2011 investigation by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found fracking contaminated two wells with high concentrations of benzene, a known carcinogen, in Wyoming.

Another potential risk is sour gas, which can be found in 30 per cent of the natural gas and crude oil reserves in Western Canada, according to the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers.

When fracking occurs in sour gas zones, the risk of gas leaks can be fatal. Sour gas contains hydrogen sulphide, which is highly toxic and can kill in seconds in high concentrations. THANDI FLETCHER/METRO IN VANCOUVER

Health risk study

- A 2010 Endocrine Disruption Exchange study determined that more than 75 per cent of chemicals used in fracking can affect the skin, eyes, and the respiratory and digestive systems.
- The non-profit group dedicated to researching health and environmental problems caused by exposure to chemicals found about 40 to 50 per cent of the chemicals could affect the nervous system, immune system, cardiovascular system and the kidneys.
- Twenty-five per cent of the chemicals are known to cause cancer.

A truck pulls out of an active wellsite in the Lochend area near Cochrane, Alta., on April 7. MATT KIELTYKA/METRO IN VANCOUVER

'Sudden failure.' Horse breeder still feeling effects of uncontrollable wellsite blast in 2009

MATT KIELTYKA
Metro in Vancouver

Glenda Wagar jolted from bed at 3 a.m. as the roar of jetting gas boomed through the frigid November air.

It smelled like rotten eggs.

"There's a problem, I can't breathe," she clutched for her sleeping boyfriend.

Confused and weary, she left the safety of her home in the dead of night to investigate.

The rural landscape outside her front door was engulfed in a thick, white fog that rolled with the countryside.

"I couldn't even see the little trees across the driveway. It was just fogged right in."

The social worker and horse breeder spent the next six hours searching her property — a quarter section of farmland, and another half section of grazing land for her 60 horses in Pouce Coupe (just south of Dawson Creek in northeast B.C.) — for broken sewer lines, while frantically trying to call neighbours and emergency responders to find out what happened.

At 9 a.m., with the unrelenting blast of "jet engines" and stench still in the air, Wager finally learned the severity of her situation.

"A truck drove up the yard and was honking like crazy," she recalls.

It was a local hunter who had taken his life into his own hands to warn residents they were at risk.

"He said, 'You're in the middle of a cloud. Get out, get out, get out!"

On Nov. 22, 2009, Encana wellsite A5-7-77-14 L W6M, near Wagar's ranch, failed in sudden and spectacular fashion.

A B.C. Oil and Gas Commission investigation found that a tee section of piping developed a leak when blasted from the inside by fracture sand (used to break up shale rock formations) that should have been cleaned out after the fracking process.

"It just peeled that steel out like it was cheese," figures Pat Gerlinsky, Wagar's boyfriend.

The leak intensified for hours until 8:38 a.m., when it developed into a full-blown "sudden failure," according to the incident report.

The emergency shutoff valve closed automatically at 9:05 a.m. but was unable to stop the "uncontrollable" flow of gas because the valve was downstream from the failure point.

It wasn't until the Encana control room at Hythe, Alta., more than 60 kilometres away, received a hydrogen sulfide (also known as sour gas) alarm at 9:10 a.m. that the company's response to the incident began.

A total of 18 people were evacuated from within a 1.34-kilometre radius of the well.

Most had gotten themselves out of harm's way.

By the time the well was shut

cut into the land by its snaking rivers, forests and swampy muskeg. Welcome to industry. It means jobs and loads of money. But getting the gas out of the ground at the state of fracking in Canada and the potential health implications

OF FRACKING

Wagar, who breeds horses, says the mares had fewer foals the year of the sour gas leak. EMILY JACKSON/METRO IN VANCOUVER

Gerlinsky and Wagar walk down the road to visit their horses. Due to Wagar's health problems, she plans to sell half the herd. EMILY JACKSON/METRO IN VANCOUVER

Striking a sour note even now

"It hasn't gotten better. ... There's always a pain there." Glenda Wagar, horse breeder

at 10:45 a.m., approximately 30,000 cubic metres of natural gas containing approximately 6,200 ppm (parts per million) of potentially lethal — though the commission classified it as "low level of toxicity" — sour gas were released into the atmosphere.

Encana, through a Community Environmental Justice Forum, paid out $250,000 in compensation to the Pouce Coupe fire department, emergency evacuation preparedness programs at Tate Creek Community Centre and Ducks Unlimited Canada wetlands projects.

"Encana took full responsibility for the failure and deeply regrets its occurrence," said Encana spokesperson Doug McIntyre in an email to Metro. "Encana implemented a number of mitigation measures including recommendations from the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission to help prevent this type of incident from happening in the future."

But having lived through the ordeal, Wagar says her health, especially her respiratory system, has been permanently damaged.

"I was coughing and my eyes were watering and I had a hard time breathing," she said.

Doctors, through X-rays and breathing tests, told Wagar her lungs are "compromised" but can't link it to the gas leak.

The dizzy spells she experiences since the leak mean Wagar can't drive for long distances and that she's been unable to continue working as a social worker.

She also can't ride horses much anymore, the love of her life since she was five years old.

Time has not restored Wagar's faith in the gas industry, especially as fracking operations in northeast B.C. expand to feed the province's liquefied natural gas dreams.

"Like I told Encana, 'You should have been finding dead people,'" she said, stone-faced.

Time also does not heal all wounds. "It hasn't gotten better. The dizziness is getting worse and the pain in my chest is the same. It hasn't gotten worse or better," she said. "There's always a pain there."

Liquefied natural gas. It's a pipeline to prosperity for B.C.'s Fort St. John

The short drive from the North Peace Regional Airport to the municipality of Fort St. John, B.C. reveals much about where the wealth of the northeast of the province lies.

It's no Vegas strip, but signs welcome you to the "Energetic" north as modern new corporate offices for Shell Canada, Talisman Energy, Canadian Natural Resources, Can-Am Geomatics B.C. and the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission line the road into "B.C.'s Energy Capital."

The region has sizeable forestry and agriculture industries, but make no mistake: Peace Country is gas country.

And gas country has been good to Fort St. John, a fast growing city of approximately 21,600 people making an median family income of $98,643.

By contrast, the median family income in Canada was $76,511 in 2010.

Creating a community

"Ten years ago, 50 per cent of our roads were gravel with open ditches. Streetlights were pretty much non-existent and sidewalks were non-existent," said Fort St. John mayor Lori Ackerman. "We have been able to get those roads redone, and paved, curbed and guttered. We've got rec facilities. The reality is we have been working very hard to create a community where young professionals are going to enjoy life."

The growth, she said, has been attributable to a natural gas industry that has taken advantage of hydraulic fracturing to extract the region's abundant supply of shale gas.

More than 9,000 wells have been drilled in the province since 2005, the vast majority of them in this corner of B.C.

Representing just two per cent of the voting population, Ackerman is quick to point out the region and the oil and gas industry ("There's very little oil. I think we say oil and gas simply because it rolls off the tongue better") have been living in relative obscurity for decades.

Fort St. John Mayor Lori Ackerman discusses the anticipated boom in natural gas extraction. EMILY JACKSON/METRO IN VANCOUVER

Spectra Energy's McMahon gas processing plant in Taylor, B.C., is seen from the Alaska Highway on April 29. MATT KIELTYKA/METRO IN VANCOUVER

Striking it rich

+$22,132

Families in the gas-powered city of Fort St. John, B.C., make $22,132 more than the national median income.

Lucrative resource

But that changed when British Columbia Premier Christy Clark pinned the province's future on liquefied natural gas (LNG) and exporting northeast B.C.'s most lucrative resource to emerging Asian markets.

The trillion-dollar industry (a combination of gas extraction in northeast B.C. and processing and export by sea in the northwest) will create 100,000 jobs and eradicate the provincial debt, Clark promises.

David Hughes, a former geologist with the Geological Survey of Canada and current president of Global Sustainability Research, forecasts up to 50,000 new wells would have to be drilled over the next 27 years to meet the 14.6 billion cubic feet per day demands of the seven LNG export applications already approved by the National Energy Board as of January.

That would increase B.C.'s gas production to nearly 50 per cent more than what all of Canada currently produces.

Potential risks

That's grabbed the attention of not just investors, industry and government, but also environmental groups, First Nations and academics worried about the potential environmental and health risks associated with widespread fracking.

A human health assessment is underway for the Ministry of Health and documents leaked to The Canadian Press in April show B.C. Environment Ministry staff is worried methane emissions from fracking "can have a significant impact on overall emissions."

All of a sudden, all eyes are on Fort St. John.

Ackerman — who has four children working in the oil and gas industry and says there's never been a cause for fear — doesn't know if the provincial government's claims are legitimate. She's too busy dealing with the real world.

The city is currently going through a boundary extension and the population is projected to nearly double — to 40,000 — in 10 years, regardless of whether LNG pans out or not.

Her city needs doctors, nurses, schools and amenities to keep up with the growth gas extraction and the proposed Site C hydroelectric dam will bring.

Unprecedented expansion

From coast to coast, there's a huge demand for skilled workers in this remote region east of the Rocky Mountains.

"There's going to be development. It's going to get more bustling," she said. "If we're going to take advantage of the opportunities in front of us, I think LNG has to be in consideration. I'm not sure where in this province — until our forestry gets back on its feet — we'd see any other revenue sources from."

As the industry gears up for unprecedented expansion, Ackerman believes it's advanced and responsible enough to do so without harming its neighbours. MATT KIELTYKA/METRO IN VANCOUVER

MORE IN OUR FRACKING SERIES

Thursday

- **The industry.** What's being done to keep people safe.

Friday

- **Cautionary tale.** Alberta ranchers warn British Columbia to heed warnings.

Online

- **Thinglink.** What is fracking?

With little military help, residents form search parties to look for captured girls

Chibok girls school. A student who escaped her captors recounts the harrowing experience

The girls in the school dorm heard the sound of gunshots from a nearby town. So when armed men in uniforms burst in and promised to rescue them, at first they were relieved.

"Don't worry, we're soldiers," one 16-year-old girl recalls them saying. "Nothing is going to happen to you."

The gunmen commanded the hundreds of students at the Chibok Government Girls Secondary School to gather outside. The men were not government soldiers at all. They were members of the ruthless Islamic extremist group called Boko Haram. They kidnapped the entire group of girls and drove them away into the forest.

There were too many gunmen to count, said the girl who escaped. So, even after the students realized the men were Islamic extremists, they sat obediently in the dirt. The men set the school ablaze and herded the girl's group onto the backs of three pickup trucks.

The trucks drove through three villages, but then the car of fighters following them broke down. That's when the girl and her friend jumped out.

As they jumped, the car behind started up. The girls did not know if the fighters could see them, so they ran and hid. Later on, a man on a bicycle found them and accompanied them home. There, they were met with tears of joy.

Three weeks later, 276 girls are still missing. At least two have died of snakebite, and about 20 others are ill, according to an intermediary who is in touch with their captors.

With little confidence in the military, residents of Chibok bought fuel for motorcycles and headed into the dangerous Sambisa Forest themselves.

An old man herding cattle warned them that they were close, but that they and their daughters could be killed if they confronted the militants.

The searchers returned to Chibok and appealed to the few soldiers there to accompany them into the forest. Parents ask why they came within a couple of miles of their daughters, yet the military did not.

"What was strange was that none of the people we spoke to had seen a soldier man in the area, yet the military were saying they were in hot pursuit," said Mutah Buba, who joined the search to look for his sisters and nieces.

However, the military says it is diligently searching, with extensive aerial surveillance.

The 16-year-old who escaped keeps thinking of her friends, and wondering why she was able to get away while they are still captive. "I am really lucky and I can thank God for that," she said. "But God must help all of them." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

People march in front of the Nigerian embassy in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday to protest the kidnapping of nearly 300 teenage girls, abducted from a school in the remote northeast of Nigeria. MANUEL BALCE CENETA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing police detain prominent rights lawyer

Chinese authorities detained a well-known rights lawyer and several other people Tuesday in an apparent bid to deter activists from marking the upcoming 25th anniversary of a brutal military suppression of pro-democracy protesters.

Beijing police placed Pu Zhiqiang under criminal detention early in the morning, according to Qu Zhenhong, an associate at Pu's firm who has been in contact with his family.

Pu enjoys mainstream prominence that is unusual for most dissidents, and news of his detention was circulating widely on Chinese microblogs. Despite his outspoken criticism of the government, Pu has been featured in magazines and interviewed about labour camps, against which he led high-profile campaigns.

He has represented both high-profile dissidents such as the artist Ai Weiwei as well as the family members of Communist Party members who died in custody of the party's anti-graft investigators after being tortured.

Two of Pu's close friends, Beijing activist Hu Jia and Shanghai lawyer Si Weijiang, said the detention was likely the authorities' retaliation against Pu for attending a seminar in Beijing on Saturday to discuss the June 4, 1989, military crackdown on demonstrators in Tiananmen Square.

Several other people who attended the seminar, including Beijing-based scholars Hao Jian and Xu Youyu and blogger and free speech activist Liu Di, were similarly detained Tuesday, Hu said, citing their family members.

The Chinese government has never fully disclosed what happened during the crackdown on pro-democracy protesters that killed hundreds and has branded the protests a "counterrevolutionary riot."

Pu had taken part in the 1989 demonstrations when he was a graduate student. The tumultuous protests lasted seven weeks. Army troops backed by tanks crushed the unarmed protesters.

Public discussion of the crackdown remains taboo in China, making the seminar — reports of which trickled out to the public by social media postings — an unusually bold event.

"To me, it was a very normal seminar," said Zhang Xianling, a member of a group that campaigns for the crackdown's victims. Zhang, who lost her 19-year-old son in the military suppression, attended the discussion on Saturday afternoon.

"The atmosphere of discussions was very warm and friendly. I found it very inspiring," Zhang said.

Pu has not been formally indicted. Beijing police had no comment. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this 2012 photo, human rights lawyer Pu Zhiqiang works near his computer in Beijing. ANDY WONG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Climate change. Report says weather-related woes caused by global warming

Global warming is rapidly turning America the beautiful into America the stormy, sneezy and dangerous, according to a new federal scientific report. And those shining seas? Rising and costly, the report says.

Climate change's assorted harms "are expected to become increasingly disruptive across the nation throughout this century and beyond," the National Climate Assessment concluded Tuesday. The report emphasizes that warming and all-too-wild weather are changing daily lives, using the phrase "climate disruption" as another way of saying global warming.

Still, it's not too late to prevent the worst of climate change, says the 840-page report, which the White House is highlighting as it tries to jumpstart stalled efforts to curb heat-trapping gases.

White House science adviser John Holdren called the report, the third edition of a congressionally mandated study, "the loudest and clearest alarm bell to date signalling the need to take urgent action." Later this summer, the Obama administration plans to propose new and controversial regulations restricting gases that come from existing coal-fired power plants.

Some fossil energy groups, conservative think tanks and Republican senators immediately assailed the report as "alarmist." Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said President Barack Obama was likely to "use the platform to renew his call for a national energy tax."

The report says "climate change threatens human health and well-being in many ways."

Flooding alone may cost $325 billion by the year 2100 in one of the worst-case scenarios, with $130 billion of that in Florida, the report says. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this file photo, State Park police officer Thomas Bigham walks across a cracked lake bed in San Angelo, Texas. TONY GUTIERREZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Colorado

Pilot crashes into his former home

A pilot crashed into a home that he once owned near Denver.

Pilot Brian Veatch confirmed to KMGH-TV that he owned the home, as indicated by property records, but said he didn't realize that's where he crashed until someone else pointed it out. He now lives about a mile away.

The plane was towing a banner for an insurance company and was supposed to fly over a Colorado Rockies baseball game when it crashed. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape St. George

Whale still troubles N.L. community

People living in Cape St. George, N.L., aren't sure what to do with a dead whale along their shoreline.

But Mayor Peter Fenwick tried to sell the carcass on eBay, but it was taken down. Whale rescue expert Wayne Ledwell says decomposition could take a few months once it's cut open, if the community can put up with the stench. THE CANADIAN PRESS

WestJet Airlines, Air Canada rivalry reaches new heights

Increased competition.
Calgary airline could give Canada's largest carrier a run for its money if its 'value-based' global service gets off ground

Clive Beddoe, chairman and co-founder of WestJet Airlines, speaks at the company's annual general meeting of shareholders in Toronto on Tuesday. DARREN CALABRESE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

WestJet Airlines says it could take its rivalry with Air Canada overseas by launching an international service using large wide-body aircraft.

The Calgary-based airline said Tuesday the new service could be in place in one-and-a-half to three-and-a-half years, if its board gives the green light. WestJet has been discussing the move with its pilots and also meeting with potential airplane lessors and manufacturers.

"So no decision made yet, but we're getting all the pieces in place to be able to make a good decision," president and CEO Gregg Saretsky said during a conference call to discuss its first-quarter results, which saw a lower profit.

WestJet is already getting into the European market by launching service next month to Dublin from St. John's, N.L., using its narrow-body Boeing 737 aircraft. It said demand is so strong the seasonal service will be extended by about three weeks to Oct. 25.

"All of that gives us great confidence that there is strong demand for a value-based international product that WestJet is looking to pursue," Saretsky said before the airline's annual meeting in Toronto.

He declined to say how many large planes could be added to its fleet, or which destinations could be served.

"Obviously, we are looking for markets that are burdened by very high airfares and there are lots of those in the international space so there are opportunities across many geographies."

Expanding its global footprint would allow Canada's second-largest airline to challenge carriers like Air Canada and tour operators including Transat, which fly large planes to many destinations including Europe.

While it assesses this new opportunity, WestJet said it is also upgrading its technology before deciding later this year whether to add a fee for first checked bags.

Saretsky said the decision by Porter Airlines to begin charging $25 for the first bag and $35 for a second bag checked on domestic travel is "indicative of the steps that airlines are needing to take to offset the headwinds that we're all facing."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 91.92¢ (+0.61¢)

TSX 14,612.29 (-84.74)

OIL $99.50 US (+$0.02)

GOLD $1,308.60 US (-$0.70)

Natural gas: $4.79 US (+$0.09)
Dow Jones: 16,401.02 (-129.53)

Going out of business.
After 35 years, clothier Jacob files for bankruptcy

A man walks by a Jacob clothing store in Montreal Tuesday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Women's clothing retailer Jacob Inc. has filed for bankruptcy and will be liquidating inventory at all 92 of its stores across Canada in the coming weeks.

The Montreal-based company has been under creditor protection since November 2010 and underwent operational restructuring. But the company says it was unable to make the business profitable or to find new financiers.

In a release issued on Tuesday, the company cited the challenging economy plus the influx of new international retailers to the Canadian marketplace among the factors leading to the company's inability to overcome its financial challenges.

"Although we did not achieve the desired result, I am proud of the passion and dedication that the Jacob team showcased over these past few years while trying to bring the company back to financial health," president and founder Joey Basmaji said in a statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Freedom of press

Media fight for right to use drones

More than a dozen media organizations challenged the government's ban on the use of drones by journalists Tuesday, saying the Federal Aviation Administration's position violates First Amendment protections for news gathering.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pet food

Nestlé has a dog in this legal fight

Nestlé Purina PetCare Co. filed suit Tuesday against Blue Buffalo Co. Ltd., accusing its competitor of misleading consumers about the ingredients in its dog and cat foods.

The lawsuit accuses Blue Buffalo of false advertising, disparagement and unjust enrichment.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Under the provision of *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulations Act, 1997* Notice is hereby given that 101251907 Saskatchewan Ltd. has applied to the Liquor and Gaming Authority for a Restaurant Permit w/ Lounge Endorsement and Tavern Permit to sell alcohol in premises known as David's Restaurant at 114-294 Venture Crescent, Saskatoon, SK of which the following is a correct legal description:

Lot 2B
Block 100
Plan No. 82S08042
114 Venture Crescent
Saskatoon, SK

Written objections to the granting of the permit may be filed with SLGA not more than two weeks from the date of publication of this notice.

Every person filing a written objection with SLGA shall state their name, address and telephone number in printed form, as well as grounds for the objection(s). Petitions must name a contact person, state grounds and be legible. Each signatory to the petition and the contact person must provide an address and telephone number. Frivolous, vexatious or competition-based objections within the beverage alcohol industry may not be considered, and may be rejected by the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Licensing Commission, who may refuse to hold a hearing.

Write to:
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Regina, SK S4P 3M3

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CINCO DE MAYO, LOS BANDITOS & LIME

JUST SAYIN'

Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

One of the funniest classic Monty Python sketches features legendary 18th century highwayman Dennis Moore accosting a stage coach and demanding that the occupants "Hand over all the lupins you've got!"

"Lupins?" asks the puzzled victim. "You mean the flower, lupin?"

"Yes, lupins. Come on, come on."

"Well, we haven't got any lupins."

It goes on. Laugh if you will, but truth is stranger than fiction.

Mexican drug cartels are muscling in on the fruit crop — limes, in particular.

Yes, limes, the little green citrus fruit. Turns out Mexico is the world's leading exporter of limes.

Drug cartels, finding it increasingly difficult to get drugs across the U.S. border, are running extortion rackets on lime growers, threatening dire consequences like burning down the farm unless the growers fork over a percentage of their crop.

The crop was already suffering the effects of a rough winter, even by Mexican standards. One cartel, the so-called Knights Templar, based in the Michoacan, the main lime-producing centre of Mexico, saw an opportunity to profit from the shortage and squeeze the farmers, and their limes, dry.

This dastardly lime crime comes at a bad time: Cinco de Mayo. Limes are an essential compañero to a full array of celebration beverages: mojitos, margaritas and, of course, the ever-popular cerveza.

Back in January, limes sold for an average $22 US per case. Since the desperadoes got involved, the price has skyrocketed to $100 US a case, and as much as $1.54 per lime (in Calgary). Airlines have removed limes from the menu, substituting lemons instead.

So far, no one has demanded that we hand over our lemons.

Really, it's only a matter of time. The cartels are already starting to move into the avocado market. Holy guacamole, Batman!

It was bad enough when these banditos were exploiting human misery and addiction, but now that they are having an impact on our very guacamole, they've gone too far. Call in the GEA (the Guacamole Enforcement Agency)!

You can imagine what's going on in Hollywood right now. Screenwriters and directors are huddling over beer and lemons, pitching concepts featuring supermodels who track down lime bandits and cross the border to recover the contraband fruit shipments and restore them to their rightful owners.

Meanwhile, in the "real" world, lime farmers have actually formed vigilante groups to fight back against the cartels. Fearing further Cinco de Mayhem, the Mexican military has moved in, demanding that the vigilante groups dissolve by El Decimo de Mayo. Talk about a Mexican standoff.

Enjoy that dip while you can, amigo, and pray the guacamole bandits don't go after our lupins.

ZOOM

Turns out it was just a reflector

Fast-changing lighting made this photograph a challenging one to capture. "With the late afternoon sun, the whole area was changing in appearance minute-by-minute," said photographer Darrell Staggs. Staggs used a glare-reducing polarizing filter "to capture the full reflection of the canyon wall, but also retain the 'shadow' reflection of the hiker." PETER MACDIARMID/GETTY IMAGES

A real cliffhanger ... actually it's a fake one

This image seems to show a hiker teetering on a cliff's edge, but a closer inspection reveals that it's a pool of water acting as a perfect mirror for canyon walls.

The optical-illusion picture, taken in Glen Canyon in Utah, is a winning entry in this year's Share the Experience photo contest, which celebrates America's national parks in pictures.

METRO

But what is real, anyway?

Staggs, who now specializes in optical-illusion photography, hopes that viewers will appreciate how "the contradictions in the image begin to give way to the truth of the reflection," and thus see the picture's artistic side.

"This is how a photograph can transition into art — a photo to look at, and art to think about."

METRO

Photog's view

"Even though I've looked at it countless times, the picture remains an elusive illusion. It's difficult to discern what is really happening there."

Darrell Staggs, 50, chemical engineer & amateur photographer from Mooresville, Ind.

METRO AUGMENTED REALITY

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MetroTube

Japan comes by its eccentricity honestly

ANDREW FIFIELD
metronews.ca

If you're anything like us, you've spent a lot of time wondering how the Japanese manage to come up with an endless parade of curious, absurd, amazing, helpful and awe-inspiring ideas. Cat cafés. Love hotels. The world's most robust vending-machine shopping. How do they conceive of it all?

Well, as suggested by this lesson in Nakizumo — a rite-of-spring crying contest involving babies and gently antagonistic sumo wrestlers — the Japanese have a centuries-old tradition of esoteric cultural development that has paved the way for the wonderfully one-of-a-kind place it is today.
(Via Ronin Dave on YouTube)

GETTY IMAGES

metro

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See that symbol? It means you can scan the photo below with your Metro News app. Don't reply! Chef gets some social media advice.

Films to whet your appetite

Foodie movies. A new film starring Jon Favreau may offer some tantalizing food scenes, but it's not Hollywood's only foray into the kitchen

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Jon Favreau (left) stars in Chef. CONTRIBUTED

Chefs are the Food Network's stock in trade. From Bobby Flay to Giada De Laurentiis, and Iron Chef to Top Chef, the delicious channel has created a cult of celebrity around the people who make our food.

A new film, Chef, takes a celebrity, actor Jon Favreau, and casts him as a restaurateur who has lost his way and desperately wants to reclaim his cooking cred.

In the film, he plays Carl Casper, a Los Angeles chef who hightails it to his Miami hometown when his fancy restaurant gets a scathing review from an online food critic (Oliver Platt). There he buys El Jefe Cubanos, a food truck he plans on driving across the country with his son (Emjay Anthony).

High on food porn — there's even a shrimp scampi seduction scene — and Cuban sandwich recipes, Chef is a movie that may whet audience appetites for other movies about the people that make our food.

In The Big Night, Stanley Tucci plays Secondo, owner of an Italian restaurant called Paradise. The place is slowly going broke but may get a boost from a visit by singer Louis Prima. If Prima shows up, the restaurant will have a big night and be saved from bankruptcy.

It's not only one of the greatest food movies ever made (you'll want to go for risotto afterward) but it also features what Rolling Stone's Peter Travers called "an unforgettable acting duet" between Tucci and Tony Shalhoub, who plays his temperamental chef brother, "that is as richly authentic as the food."

Ratatouille takes a different approach. An unusual cross between America's Next Top Chef and Willard, the Pixar movie does something no other film has been able to (not that a lot have tried): It makes rats cute. Lovable, even.

The story of a cooking rat is chef and TV presenter Anthony Bourdain's favourite food film. "They got the food, the reactions to food, and tiny details to food really right," said The Taste host, "down to the barely noticeable pink burns on one of the character's forearms. I really thought it captured a passionate love of food in a way that very few other films have."

Real chefs are featured in the documentary Spinning Plates. Weaving together three stories from a trio of very different restaurateurs, the film shows the personal and professional side of the food biz as well as the connection to the community that's so important for success.

It cuts through the Food Network's simplistic food-family-and-feelings approach with a tagline that sums up its philosophy: "It's not what you cook. It's why."

Nick Offerman

Actor joins A Walk in the Woods

The actor known for playing Ron Swanson on Parks and Recreation has just joined the cast of the indie film adapted from Bill Bryson's iconic book, TheWrap.com reports.

Nick Offerman will join Emma Thompson and Kristen Schaal in the supporting cast of A Walk in the Woods. Robert Redford and Nick Nolte will co-star as Bill Bryson and his hiking companion.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sally Field, after more than three decades of winning her first Oscar, got a star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. GETTY IMAGES

Sally Field. A (Walk of Fame) star is born

Oscar-winning actress Sally Field finally got a star on Hollywood's storied Walk of Fame on Monday, more than three decades after she earned her first Academy Award.

The 67-year-old joked about her roller-coaster career spanning five decades, including her Oscar-winning performances in 1979's Norma Rae and 1984's Places in the Heart.

"I've ridden the highs, and tried to learn from the lows," she said on Hollywood Boulevard, where her star is the 2,524th on the famous stretch of sidewalk perused by millions of tourists ever year, at the heart of Tinseltown.

At her star-unveiling ceremony Field said, "I've worked my whole life, and feel the many miles I have accumulated in this saddle. And I can tell you ... in these last 50 years I have not ever, not once, considered changing my mind."

Field, who was nominated for an Oscar last year for Steven Spielberg's historical drama Lincoln, appears in The Amazing Spider-Man 2, which has just topped the North American box office on its debut weekend. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Megan Fox ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Pregnant Megan Fox was 'constantly on the verge of vomiting' on TMNT set

Megan Fox admits that both her pregnancies with husband Brian Austin Green were complete surprises. "We can't let Brian near me anymore," she joked to Ellen DeGeneres during an interview. Joking aside, a pregnancy coming out of nowhere can be a bit stressful, especially if you're just starting production on Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, as Fox was. "It's an action movie and requires a lot of running and jumping and stunts. Anyone that's been pregnant knows your first trimester can be pretty rough and you're nauseous all day long," she says. "The producers would come see me in the morning in the makeup trailer and I would be clinging to a box of saltines. We kept pickles in the refrigerator for me, and I was constantly on the verge of vomiting."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Ansel plays Shailene's bro in one film, lover in another

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News

Usually, movie stars gush to the press that they can't believe how amazing their co-stars were. But Shailene Woodley, star of The Fault in Our Stars, is going around telling the press that she can't believe Ansel Elgort was cast at all.

It's not as mean as it sounds. Woodley, who plays a terminally ill teen in The Fault in Our Stars, also starred in the recent dystopian thriller Divergent. In that film, Elgort played her brother, so Woodley was certain that their onscreen siblinghood would keep him from playing her love interest in TFiOS: the dreamy Augustus Waters.

But Woodley says Elgort's just that good. "Everybody in the room was sort of like, 'Wow,'" she said.

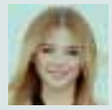
But it's going to make the next Divergent movie a little weird to watch. I'll keep expecting Tris to make out with her brother.

And it was all mellow: Chris and Gwyneth continue to pal around

For a husband and wife who are separating, Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin seem pretty cool about hanging out together. Last month, they joined forces for son Moses' 8th birthday and now they've been seen together again during a group dinner in Santa Monica, Calif., where sources spotted them smiling and laughing.

Gwyneth Paltrow

Twitter



@ChloeGMoretz
btw, i was 100% the shortest girl at the #MetGala

@EmmaBunton
It's my gorgeous little boys 3rd birthday, time is going too fast!

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See that symbol? It means you can scan the photo below with your Metro News app for more images from the Okanagan Valley

Deserts and mountains and vineyards, oh my!

The Okanagan Valley. Want to forget this brutal winter? This spring, take a trip through some of the nicest wine country in Canada

DOUGLAS PATON
life@metronews.ca

These views will have you Kelowna-fornia dreaming. CONTRIBUTED/TOURISM BC

There's something almost surreal about the view.

The snow-frosted mountain contrast starkly with the 20-plus-degree temperatures, blue skies and the cherry blossoms that surround you on the valley floor. But, from your vantage point, sitting on a winery patio with a glass of wine, and enjoying the weather in short sleeves and flip-flops, it's just what you need to shake off the winter blues from a season that felt like it was ushering in a new ice age.

Nestled between the Monashee Mountain range to the east and the Cascade Mountains to the west, British Columbia's Okanagan Valley is one of those places that makes Canada a truly unique country.

With summertime temperatures that push into the 40s, without even a hint of humidity, and winters that usually only drop below zero long enough to harvest icewine grapes, the Okanagan has become one of the best wine producing regions in Canada.

For those looking to spend a long weekend jump-starting the summer, and who want a chance to experience what the wineries of the Okanagan Valley have to offer, there is no better time to visit than during the Spring Wine Festival, which runs until May 11.

For many of the wineries in the Okanagan, the festival, currently in its 20th year, is the perfect way to usher in the first crop of tourists for the year and to show off their new vintages. Many wineries host wonderful events ranging from food and wine pairings to grand soirées and it's possible to plan an entire weekend around those events.

For those who want a more self-guided tour, perhaps the single hardest decision you'll make all weekend is where to start. After all, there are over 200 award-winning wineries in the Okanagan, and you do only have three days.

Perhaps the best piece of advice I can offer is to find a central location and work from there. You're never really more than a hour's drive away from any one part of the Okanagan Valley, but the more centrally located you are, the less driving you have to do and the more wine you can enjoy.

Located approximately 60 kilometres to the south of the Kelowna airport, the town of Summerland offers up the perfect central location and the 14 wineries of the Summerland's Bottleneck Drive provide a fantastic sampling of what you can expect from the Valley, everything from award-winning sparkling wines to small-batch wines that sell out almost as soon as they're offered up for sale.

Like many places in the Okanagan, Summerland is not only about the wine. The Kettle Valley Steam Railway offers a scenic tour through vineyards, orchards and gulches and, for the hikers, you can't beat the view from the top of Giant's Head Mountain, almost smack dab in the middle of town.

Heading south from Summerland takes you past the wine country B.C. VQA Wine Information Centre in Penticton — which sells wine from many B.C. wineries and can help you plan out your route — through Oliver's Golden Mile and down into Canada's only desert region. The heat from the Northern tip of the Sonoran Desert helps the winemakers from the Oliver-Osoyoos Winery Association grow bold red wines.

Like all good things, every visit to the Okanagan must come to an end and, if you're like most people, you'll probably find yourself thinking, "I really wish I'd bought just one more bottle of wine to share with my friends back home." Rest assured, the Kelowna Airport has you covered with the only wine shop located beyond security in Canada. And, yes, you can take any wine you buy at the airport wine shop on the plane with you.

If you go...

- **The Spring Wine Festival.** Runs May 1-11 thewinefestivals.com.
- **Summerland's Bottleneck Drive.** bottleneckdrive.com.
- **Kettle Valley Steam Railway.** kettlevalleyrail.org.
- **BC VQA Wine Information Centre.** pentictonwineinfo.com.
- **Oliver-Osoyoos Winery Association.** oliverosoyoos.com.

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Bucket List

Sailing on the Bosphorus

All the great waterways of the world have their enclaves of amazing homes. But when it comes to the wooden Ottoman waterfront mansions that line the infamous Bosphorus Strait, separating the European and Asian sides of Istanbul, Turkey, you're in for some prime sail-by gawking. These "yali" are generally secondary "beach" houses, built between the late 1690s and the early 1900s by wealthy families of the region. On the rare occasion when one goes on the market, the ticket price ranges an astronomical $85 million to $200 million, with the reasoning being, according to a tour guide, that "there are many houses to buy in this world, but only one Bosphorus."

DOUG WALLACE/METRO

Live like a local when you're abroad

Authentic travel. Want to get a true taste of local culture? Here are some tips for stepping off the tourist track

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

Having an experience that feels authentic to the destination is often a highlight of any holiday. But how does a tourist find those secret spots and have interactions that make them feel less like an outsider?

Book alternative accommodation. Instead of a hotel, stay somewhere that's off the tourist track, consider a bed and breakfast, check into a university residence (during the summer months) or rent a house in a residential neighbourhood.

You will be more exposed to the rhythms of everyday life taking out the garbage, chatting with the neighbours or shopping at the local grocery store.

Avoid the usual suspects. Ask a shopkeeper, waiter or stranger on the street where their favourite neighbourhood haunt is, whether it's a café, bar or restaurant.

Clarify that you are willing to travel and not necessarily looking for something close by. Don't ask the hotel concierge as they are often trained to send you to places designed to serve tourists.

Pick up a local entertainment paper and search the current listings for exhibits, clubs or concerts.

Do something on vacation that you would normally reserve for home. Go ahead and cheat on your stylist and get a haircut at that 1950s era barbershop on the corner, work out at the local gym or go to a church service. Watching people worship is an intimate cultural experience that can give great insight into a destination. Confirm in advance that you are welcome to participate, either actively or from the sidelines.

Also ensure that you are dressed appropriately; the last thing you want to do is offend someone.

Find your tribe. If you have a hobby that you love, whether it's knitting, books or cycling, try and hook up with like-minded locals. Research your destination for clubs, enthusiasts' groups or the local hangout. It's not only a great way to see a new destination, but meeting people who share common interests increases your chances of a striking up a conversation, which could lead to other tips, advice and discoveries.

Take it online. Many the trip-sharing advice sites like TripAdvisor.com are useful in helping you find those hidden gems.

Follow the Twitter handle of the city that you're visiting for updates on local events or download one of the numerous apps that offer insider opportunities.

EatWith, for example, connects travellers interested in a home-cooked meal with a host willing to welcome them in to their private dining room.

Connect with your tribe when abroad: Find people who share your interests — like cycling. ISTOCK

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How-to

Jazz up your travel experience

1. You don't have to sleep at the fancy hotels to enjoy them. Pop by for a drink at the bar before you head out for dinner.

2. Ditto brunch (such as at Cecconi's Miami Beach, above). Or even better, high tea.

3. Triple ditto if the posh hotel has a nightclub that's on the DJ circuit.

4. Some hotels will let you hang out at their pool for the day for a small fee, especially in areas with a high density of tourists.

5. Swank hotel lobbies make for excellent people-watching — and that's free.

DOUG WALLACE/METRO

Trend

CONTRIBUTED/EDEN ROC

Canadian women travel more

Chalk another one up for the importance of "me time." A new survey from hotel-finding giant Booking.com reports that Canadian women travel solo more often than women in any other country except Australia, with whom they are tied. A whopping 76 per cent said they have headed to the airport alone before. Escaping their daily lives tops the lists of reasons respondents gave (at 62 per cent), with spa holidays, beach escapes and shopping trips voted as the preferred travel themes.

DOUG WALLACE/METRO

Deal

Aeroplan hooks up with Shop.ca

Aeroplan announced last week it has signed a deal with Shop.ca that will allow Aeroplan members to earn travel miles on purchases they make at the popular online marketplace. Perks include free shipping and returns — and for a limited time, Aeroplan members can earn 15 miles for every dollar they spend on their first purchase at Shop.ca. Keep an eye out for the regular special deals that will inevitably ensue.

DOUG WALLACE/METRO

Grilling made fancy: Pesto Salmon

Quick dinner. This dish is easy enough for a weeknight meal and sophisticated enough for a entertaining guests

DINNER EXPRESS
Emily Richards
food@metronews.ca

Looking for a fast dinner for the week that can double for a fun weekend get together?

This is the one.

Salmon is so fast and easy to grill up and enjoy during the week, but also a great meal to share with friends.

This simple but elegant supper also uses fresh in-season asparagus to showcase great colour, texture and crispness right off the grill.

With a hint of lemon, it's the perfect accent to the salmon. Steam up your favourite fragrant rice to round out your plate or better yet, change it up and serve it all over a bed of greens.

Get your grill ready and try out this inspiring recipe to get you in the mood for summer.

FLASH FOOD
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Ingredients

Pesto
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) light mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) store-bought basil or sundried tomato pesto or Dijon mustard
- Pinch freshly ground black pepper and salt
- 4 boneless salmon fillets, skin on (about 600 g total weight)

Grilled Asparagus
- 1 lb (454 g) asparagus spears
- 1 tsp (5 l)) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) black pepper
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) fresh lemon juice
- Lemon wedges

1. In small bowl, whisk together mayonnaise, parsley, pesto, pepper and salt. Spread the pesto evenly over top of salmon; set aside.

2. Grilled Asparagus: Snap tough ends of asparagus off and discard. Toss spears with oil and pepper.

3. Place fillets and asparagus on greased grill over medium-high heat. Close lid; cook 10 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork and asparagus is tender crisp. Drizzle asparagus with lemon juice.

This recipe makes six servings. EMILY RICHARDS

The king of all mushrooms

King oyster mushrooms are large and cylindrical, unlike the smaller and more commonly known oyster mushroom, which is frilly and ragged. Try this tasty stir-fry as a side.

1. Pour water to depth of 1/2-inch (1 cm) into large frying pan. Bring to a boil. Add green beans; cook for 3 to 4 minutes or until almost tender. Drain and set aside.

2. In small bowl, stir together black bean garlic sauce, chili garlic sauce, soy sauce and 1/2 cup (125 ml) water. Set aside.

3. Dry frying pan with paper towel. Add oil; heat over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms; stir-fry 1 minute. Stir in ginger; stir-fry for 30 seconds. Stir in green beans and black bean sauce mixture. Cover and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until mushrooms are tender and sauce is absorbed.

PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

This recipe makes six servings. PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

Ingredients
- 10 oz (300 g) green beans, trimmed (about 4 cups/1 l)
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) black bean garlic sauce
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) chili garlic sauce
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) light soy sauce
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) canola oil
- 1 pkg (200 g) PC King Oyster Mushrooms, halved lengthwise and cut in quarters crosswise
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) julienned ginger root

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SIDNEYEVE MATRIX
TalentEgg.ca

Is there something in your schedule that's causing you a particular amount of stress? Squashing it during your peak prime-time hours will likely result in a much more productive day. ISTOCK

Start the week off right

Don't be surprised if on reflection you find that Monday and Tuesday are your most productive days of the week.

- Research shows this is the case for most of us, and the challenge is to capitalize on and continue that positive momentum as the week progresses and we get bogged down and pulled in different directions.
- Among the most highly rated apps to help you finally get on top of and manage your weekly workflow and professional projects are Handle, Trello, and Mailbox – definitely worth a look if you're seeking high-tech help to optimize your personal prime time.

Are you a morning person or night owl?

While some of us accomplish more work before breakfast than for the rest of the day, others hit their stride after dinner.

Peak performance times are deeply personal, and don't always sync with work schedules and life responsibilities.

Once you determine your own prime time for getting things done, there are many ways to take advantage of it and accomplish more.

Protect your prime time

Micromanaging your schedule to ensure you don't take on too much makes it more likely your prime time can be focused on priority tasks.

Try to block out many of those peak performance hours on your schedule and consider them sacrosanct and non-negotiable.

"The most productive people know how to say no (when they are fully committed), but most importantly, they know how to delegate and outsource," says Joanna Cohen in Inc. Magazine.

If appropriate, consider hiring a virtual assistant to help with administrative or technical tasks. Alternatively, look through your network for possible collaborators and team up to accomplish more.

Plan ahead for productivity

Productivity experts recommend matching your most difficult tasks to your most productive times.

For many of us, that is first thing in the morning. Importantly, "the first thing you accomplish at work sets the tone for the rest of the day," explains Gina Trapani. To kick-start your workday with a quick and significant win, Brian Tracy recommends you "eat the frog first" — tackling the most high priority (and perhaps dreaded) task on your desk before getting lost in the busywork of email or being distracted by coworkers.

"When you use your most productive hours, you can make a lot of progress," writes Laura Vanderkam, "and that progress is motivational."

Manage microtasks

Keep a list of micro-tasks for those small gaps in your schedule.

What items can you accomplish in transit, or on your phone? Make it a habit to postpone non-critical email responses and use read-it-later apps like Evernote or Pocket, so your phone can be a productivity tool in moments of microboredom and downtime.

"Always have an article to read for times when you are standing in line, on a bus, or waiting for an event to begin," advises the SuccessfulAcademic blog, "use all those little bits of time" to your advantage.

Time management — energy management

We know time is our most precious and finite resource.

Paying closer attention to the choices we make about how to spend it may explain why we find ourselves exhausted at the end of the day, with too many unfinished tasks.

"Monitor your working habits for one week and list the time you managed to do the most work," Prime Sarimento writes in Likehacker. Over time, inevitably a pattern will emerge, indicating your peak hours for creative and constructive work.

To shield those precious hours from the time-sucks of social media and email, check out and consider installing some social blocking and inbox management apps.

TALENTEGG.CA IS CANADA'S LEADING JOB SITE AND ONLINE CAREER RESOURCE FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES.

Bringing up bigger bucks to the boss

You raise me up? If the amount you're getting paid doesn't quite make cents to you, it may be time to mention it to upper management

RIANA TOPAN
TalentEgg.ca

Settling into your first "real" job can take some time —there's a steep learning curve while you adjust to the ways of the working world.

As an entry-level worker, one of the more difficult lessons that you'll need to learn is about how to manage your salary expectations.

Your worth as an employee is based on many factors: your level of responsibility, work experience, level of education, skill set and accomplishments, any awards or extra credentials you've earned and the contributions you make to the overall success of the company.

Your salary will also usually be determined, at least in part, by the industry you work in, your location and your employment benefits (if any).

So how are you to know what you should be earning?

Do your homework

Research similar positions, within similar industries and in similar geographic areas, to determine the average pay for the kind of work you do.

Pay close attention to job descriptions — the salaries you research should be for positions with duties and a level of responsibility akin to yours — and keep track of the market data you collect to use later in your negotiations. Certain websites, like PayScale.com, are a good starting point because they provide average salaries for a range of positions and industries.

A fair salary should reflect your value at your workplace. ISTOCK

Ask for a (timely) meeting

If possible, find out when your employer does salary reviews or makes budget decisions and ask for a meeting to discuss your professional goals a few months prior.

If this isn't possible, you can still increase your chances of success by scheduling the meeting after you've done something well or during a relatively low-stress period.

If things are particularly busy, focus on doing excellent, dependable work instead of agitating for a raise — this contribution will be valuable later.

State your case

You're finally ready to have "the talk." Tell your employer that you asked for this meeting to discuss your compensation because you believe you deserve a raise.

Share the research you've done about typical salary ranges for comparable positions and talk about your strong performance so far and how you bring value to your position.

Be respectful but confident. Emphasize that you look forward to continuing to grow with the organization. Explain why you have earned a raise, not why you need one.

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Geroy Simon's return to Riderville cloudy

CFL. GM Taman noncommittal about retaining receiver

He's the most prolific receiver in CFL history and a future member of the Canadian Football Hall of Fame, but there's no guarantee Geroy Simon will return to help the Saskatchewan Roughriders defend their Grey Cup title.

The Riders acquired the veteran slotback from the B.C. Lions in January 2013 to provide veteran leadership for a squad looking to make a successful Grey Cup run on home soil. After enduring one of the worst seasons statistically of his illustrious CFL career, Simon stood tall in the title game, registering three catches for 67 yards and two TDs in leading Saskatchewan to a 45-23 victory over the Hamilton Tiger-Cats at Mosaic Field.

However, Brendan Taman, the Riders' general manager and vice-president of football operations, couldn't guarantee Simon's return during a CFL conference call Tuesday.

"Geroy and I have, obviously, a pretty good relationship, so when we made this deal last year to acquire him we knew at the end of the first year he played for us that we'd sit down and talk about his role," Taman said. "Obviously we have a contract issue we're going to have to talk about, too, so that plan is ongoing … those talks are progressing, you could say, one way or the other.

"He's got as good a chance of not being back as he will be back."

The six-foot, 198-pound Simon, who turns 39 in September, had just 40 catches for 565 yards and three TDs last year, missing the first three regular-season games due to injury. The native of Johnstown, Pa., is the most prolific receiver in CFL history with 1,029 receptions for 16,352 yards — both all-time records — with 103 TDs over 15 seasons.

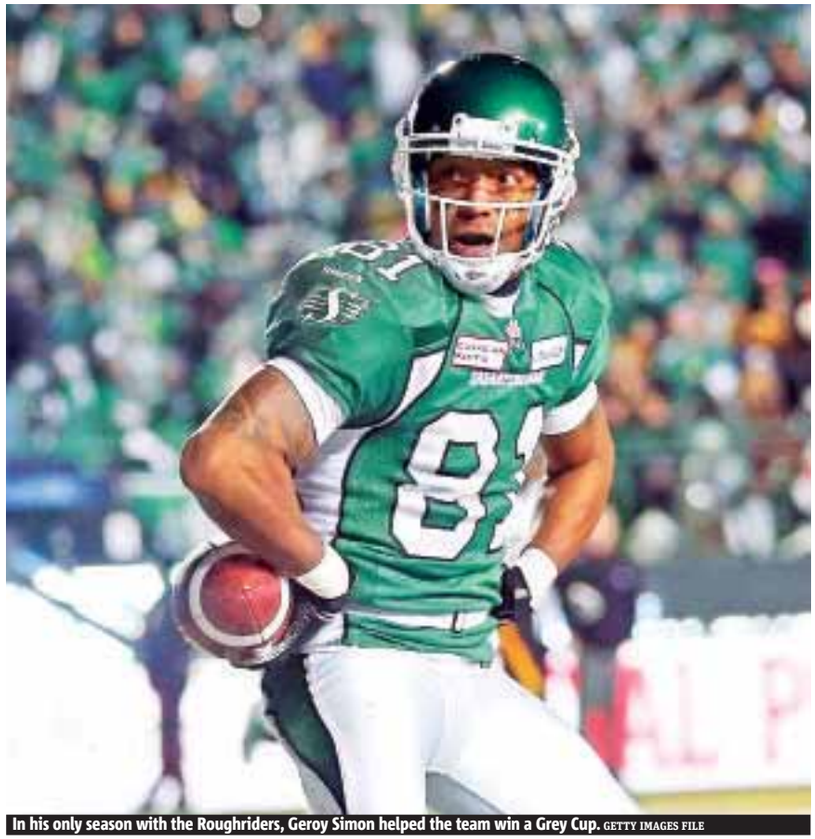
"Obviously he had a good year for us and did a good job for us," Taman said. "His status for '14 is to be determined and we're still in talks about that."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"He's got as good a chance of not being back as he will be back."

Roughriders general manager Brendan Taman on Geroy Simon



In his only season with the Roughriders, Geroy Simon helped the team win a Grey Cup. GETTY IMAGES FILE

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4 SPORTS

NBA. OKC's Durant wins first MVP trophy over LeBron, Blake Griffin

Kevin Durant has plenty of scoring titles. Now, he finally has an MVP trophy to go with them.

The Oklahoma City Thunder star won the NBA's top individual honour Tuesday, receiving 119 first-place votes. Miami's LeBron James, who had won the last two MVP awards and four of the previous five, finished second with six first-place votes, and Blake Griffin of the Los Angeles Clippers was third.

"Everything in my life, I had to take it," Durant said at a ceremony in Edmond. "They're not going to give it to you out of sympathy. I wouldn't want it any other way. This was another case, if I wanted to win the MVP, I had to go take it. I felt that this was the year I did that."

Durant won his fourth scoring crown in five years by averaging 32 points. The 6-foot-9 forward helped the Thunder go 59-23, second-best in the league, despite playing much of the season without three-time All-Star Russell Westbrook by his side because of a nagging knee injury.

"He's basically put himself in front of everybody else in the league and shown that he's the best player in the world," Westbrook said at the end of the regular season.

Durant's run of 41 consecutive games this season with at least 25 points was the third-longest streak in NBA history.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thunder forward Kevin Durant was named this season's NBA MVP. SUE OGROCKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dethroned

"Much respect to him and he deserves it. He had a big-time MVP season."

MVP runner-up LeBron James

The Bruins' Patrice Bergeron is taken out by Canadiens defenceman Douglas Murray during playoff hockey Tuesday in Montreal. PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

P.K. keeps peaking as Habs best Bruins

NHL playoffs. Defenceman, goalie help Montreal grab series lead over Boston

Game 3

Canadiens	Bruins
4	2

P.K. Subban is having a series to remember for the Montreal Canadiens

Subban, Dale Weise and Lars Eller each had a goal and an assist and Carey Price made 26 saves as the Canadiens downed the Boston Bruins 4-2 on Tuesday night to take the lead in their Eastern Conference semifinal playoff series.

Montreal leads the best-of-seven series 2-1 with Game 4 slated for Thursday night at the Bell Centre.

Subban, the 2013 Norris trophy winner as the NHL's top defenceman, has two points in each of the three games of the series and 11 points in seven playoff games so far.

"We're playing well as a team," said Subban. "I'm just the beneficiary of the guys playing well around me, supporting me.

"It starts in goal. Well, it actually starts with our coaching staff and making sure everybody is feeling confident. We're doing it together. It starts with Pricey. From our defence to our forwards. We're sticking together. When we had adversity, we're sticking together doing the right things.

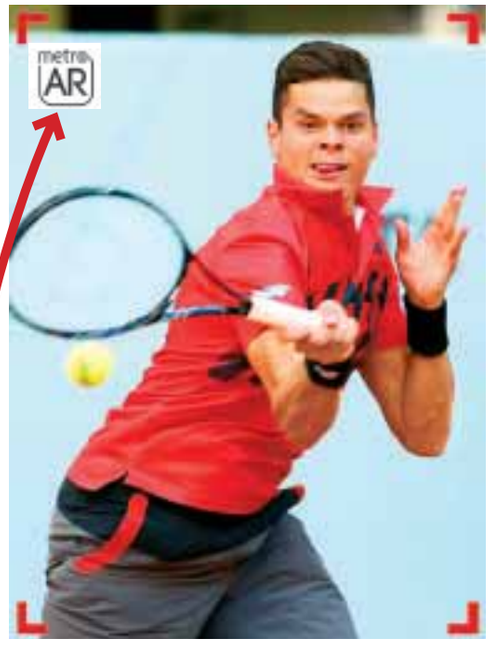
"It's fun to play on teams where you know guys are going to support you."

Tomas Plekanec also scored for Montreal, which was outplayed for long stretches but made the most of quick-strike attacks.

Patrice Bergeron and Andrej Meszaros scored for the Bruins, who outshot Montreal 28-26.

For the third straight game in the series, the Canadiens held a 3-1 lead in the third period but, for the first time, didn't let it completely slip away.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Raonic revved up in Madrid

Milos Raonic plays a forehand against France's Jeremy Chardy in their second-round match of the Madrid Open on Tuesday. Raonic won his opening match, defeating Chardy, of France, 6-3, 6-3 in just over an hour. Raonic, from Thornhill, Ont., fired 11 aces and did not have a double-fault. CLIVE BRUNSKILL/GETTY IMAGES

Ever notice tennis players make funny faces as they hit the ball? Scan the image with the Metro News app to see a collection from Tuesday's action at the Madrid Open.

LeBron James of the Heat reacts to a play in Miami on Tuesday. MIKE EHRMANN/GETTY IMAGES

Heat breeze by Nets in Game One

Turns out, the Miami Heat can beat the Brooklyn Nets.

And rest hardly led to rust for the two-time defending NBA champions.

LeBron James scored 22 points, Ray Allen added 19 and the Heat stayed perfect in this post-season by beating the Nets 107-86 on Tuesday night in Game 1 of an Eastern Conference semifinal series. It was the first win for Miami in five meetings with Brooklyn this season.

"It's one," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "But I liked the energy, the activity."

Chris Bosh scored 15 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, Dwyane Wade finished with 14 points and Mario Chalmers had 12 for Miami, which recorded at least one regular-season win against every team except Brooklyn, losing four times by a total of 12 points.

This one was a different story. A 24-9 run in the third quarter blew things open for the Heat, who hadn't played in eight days after sweeping Charlotte in the opening round.

"It was great that we were able to come out the way we did after being off eight days," James said. "We got a lot of work in. We had eight days off of not playing a basketball game but Spo got us in the gym. (We) got each other in the gym. We made each other accountable throughout the layoff and it proved tonight."

Deron Williams and Joe Johnson scored 17 points each for the Nets.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RISE OF THE ROBOTS

In 1962, General Motors put the first robots online to perform spot welding. Today the presence of robots on factory floors has grown to the point of almost full 'lights out' automation in some factories

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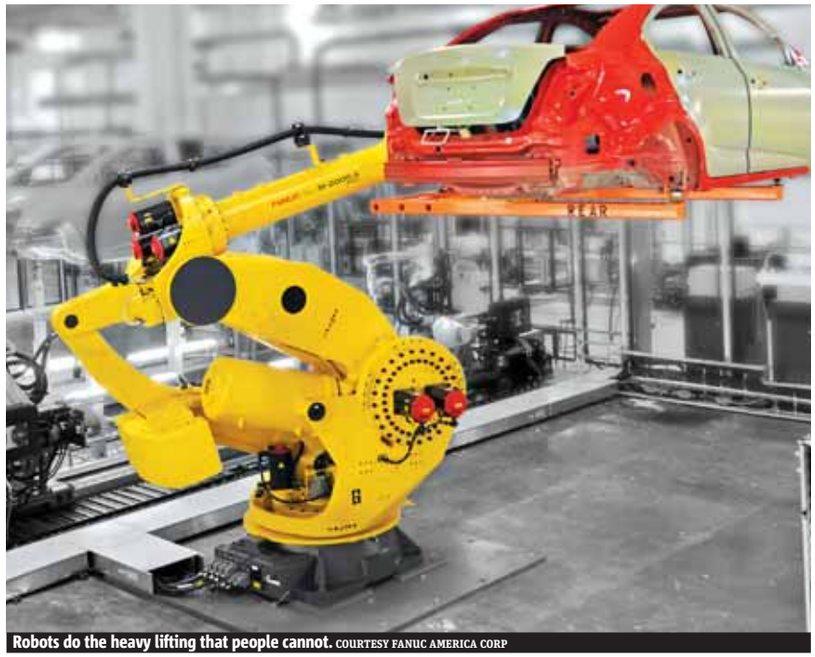

Robots do the heavy lifting that people cannot. COURTESY FANUC AMERICA CORP

Neil Dueweke still remembers the day these cold and emotionless invaders quietly overran factory floors and callously changed the course of automotive history.

These tireless workers never left their post, never called in sick, never took vacation and never once gossiped or griped about long hours or no lunch break.

With more than 25 years in the robotics business, Dueweke has been on the front lines while this technological influx has steadily made car building as safe, efficient and dependable as it ever has been.

"Robotics has changed dramatically since I've been in it," said Dueweke, body structure general manager of FANUC America Corp., a leading international industrial robotics supplier. "And the business continues to change seemingly every day."

From the simplistic single-arm robots of the 1980s used for menial tasks such as spot welding, to today's modern machines that can carry entire truck bodies and handle almost any manufacturing chore, robotics are becoming more the rule than the exception in vehicle construction.

Robotics in automotive construction continues to evolve, but the science is nothing new. Since 1962 when General Motors put the first robots online to perform spot welding and die-casting, the presence of robotics on factory floors has grown to the point of almost full "lights out" automation in some factories, where cars can be built in the dark.

And while robotic-reliant plants obviously don't help the human unemployment rate, these precise machines dramatically reduce on-the-job injuries and, Dueweke believes, improve overall morale within the workplace.

And as far as job loss? "The argument about the robots taking jobs away from people is rather in the past," said Dueweke, stressing that while the assembly line workforce may be shrinking some, maintenance and other specialized job opportunities are growing.

In addition to improved worker safety and unmatched reliability, the shrinking prices and logistical advantages of a robotic-based facility are driving auto builders more and more to automated-plant construction. Popularity and mass production of robotics have helped drive down the price of these machines by about two-thirds since the boom of the automation industry 20 or 25 years ago.

Dueweke said that anywhere from 350 to 700 robots are installed during the typical construction of a "green field" plant. A standard low-end robot used for simple assembly tasks such as spot welding or tire installation costs about $20,000 US, while the most sophisticated painting or lift-and-place machines cost $100,000 US or more.

"Price is one of the key enablers," Dueweke said. "It's a lower cost right now to put up a robotized plant versus what was done 30 or 40 years ago. "

International Federation of Robotics general secretary Gudren Litzenberger agrees, saying that the installation of robotics in manufacturing plants increases by about five per cent every year.

Japan easily carries the highest international rate of robotic equipment in the auto industry with nearly 2,000 robots for every 10,000 human employees. The U.S. ranks fourth with about 1,200 robots for every 10,000 employees. And Litzenberger expects the ratio to continually close.

"The industry would not have been able to meet the increasing demand of cars without robots," she said. "Especially with more varieties of models and improved quality."

Automotive robotics are found in three areas: the body shop where the sheet metal is attached and the frame is assembled; the paint shop where the vehicles are sealed and painted; and in general assembly when the components are attached and construction is completed.

Robots in the body and paint shops have become relatively commonplace because of the precision and consistency they provide, leaving general assembly as the area for the greatest potential autonomy growth.

"I would say in another 15 years you're going to see some significant progress in general assembly in terms of automating and changing the way vehicles are final-assembled," Dueweke said. "General assembly is the Holy Grail; that's part of the next frontier for robotics in automotive."

And the perfect climate for another automated invasion.

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The new Ford F-150 will be the first production pickup truck to use LED headlights. JIL MCINTOSH

Ford F-150 serves up futuristic twist on headlights

Light-emitting diodes. New LED lights not only energy-efficient but also long-lasting

JIL MCINTOSH
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Back when cars were first developed, they used gas lanterns, or sometimes even candles, to light their way along dark roads. Today's vehicles need bright headlights so drivers can see and be seen, but these lamps also need to be long-lasting and energy-efficient.

When Ford launches its all-new F-150 later this year, it will be the first production pickup truck to use LED headlights, one of the newest developments in headlight technology. The name is short for light-emitting diodes.

"It is creating light through electronic means," says Mahendra Dassanayake, senior technical leader for opto-electronics at Ford. "You can customize it to help with vision."

Incandescent and halogen headlights contain a filament that gets hot enough to emit light. High-intensity discharge (HID) headlights, also called xenon lights, use an electrical arc between two tungsten electrodes to heat up vapour inside the lamp, creating light.

LED lights use semiconductor chips to produce light. On Ford's lamps, the chips emit blue light, which is filtered through a phosphor material to make it appear white. A unique lens, cut with 16 optical surfaces and 80 facets, magnifies the light and spreads it evenly, so only one LED is required for each lamp.

The semiconductor chips heat up to about 50 degrees Celsius, so they're used with an integrated heat sink, a channelled holder that dissipates heat. The lens itself doesn't heat up, unlike halogen or HID headlights, which get hot. In a halogen lamp, the bulb itself gets as hot as 600 degrees Celsius, Dassanayake says.

Because the lamps stay cool, they won't melt snow that accumulates when driving in winter. Ford is working on special surface coatings that should help to reduce any buildup.

It's also important for headlamps to use as little power as possible, since the electricity is ultimately generated by the engine, and any power draw decreases fuel economy. The LED lamps are more than 50 to 60 per cent more energy-efficient than halogen lamps, and about 30 per cent more than HID headlamps. "It will improve as time goes on," Dassanayake says. "This is technology at its basic inception."

The new lamps are also more robust than other types, which is especially important in a pickup truck. Excessive vibration from off-road bumps or rough roads can shorten the lifespan of the filament in an incandescent or halogen bulb, but isn't an issue in an LED lamp, which doesn't use a filament. "I think LED is going to be the future of lighting," Dassanayake says.

All about LEDs

- LED headlamps are relatively expensive, but they're expected to last more than five times longer than halogen headlamps.
- LED lights are already used extensively in vehicles, including in taillights and interior lighting.
- The F-150's headlamps also include a thin LED tube that outlines the lamp for a unique signature appearance.

Quoted

"I think LED is going to be the future of lighting."

Mahendra Dassanayake, senior technical leader for opto-electrics at Ford

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Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
Keep your eyes and ears open today because if you don't you may miss out on an opportunity to have fun. With Mercury moving strongly in your favour, your mind will be sharp and strong, giving you a major advantage over your rivals.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You must be positive today. Both in your personal life and at work there is a lot at stake and you need to know what you want — and have the courage to reach out and take it.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Start believing that you have what it takes to make a difference. Now that Mercury, your ruler, is moving into your sign, the doubts of the past few weeks will be swept away.

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
The things you fear the most are the things from which you have least to fear. Seep that into your subconscious. The planets indicate nothing out there in the world can hurt you.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
The message of the stars is you must allow friends and family members to make more decisions for themselves. Over the past few weeks you have insisted on taking the lead. It's time to give others a chance.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You won't lack for opportunities today but don't just throw yourself at the first one that comes along. Identify what it is you most want to accomplish and wait for the right offer.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You may have been too fixed in your opinions of late but with mind planet Mercury moving in your favour, you will get the chance to review your beliefs and adjust them to fit reality.

Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Over the next two or three days you will find it easier to come to grips with a financial matter that has been keeping you awake at night. Once you find the real problem, you will also find the courage to deal with it.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Others don't have to lose out just so that you can win. Your task today is to find creative ways in which to further your own ambitions while helping others get what they need.

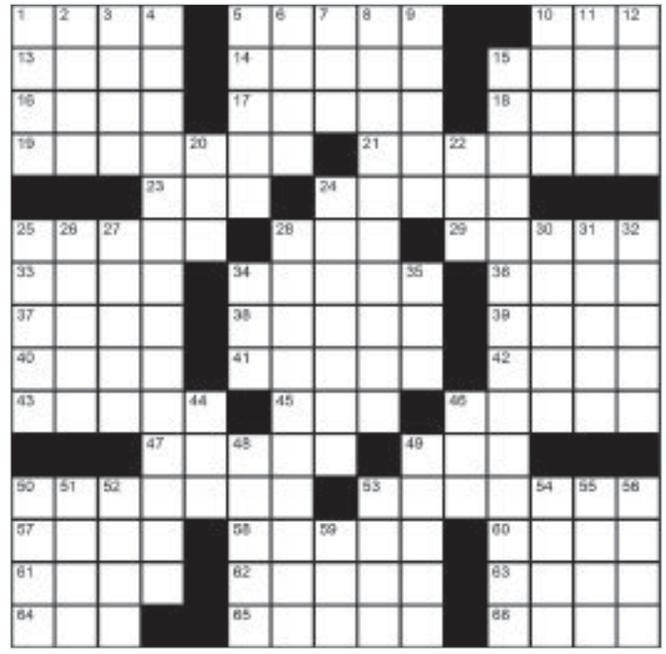
Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You have changed so often in recent weeks that you may no longer be sure which way is up, but that's OK. On the work front at least you will know without a doubt what needs to be done next. So do it.

Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Now that Mercury, planet of the mind, is moving into your fellow Air sign of Gemini the mental turmoil of the past few weeks will fade away. You can make things easier for yourself by not worrying so much.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may have to give up something that means a lot to you but you won't mind too much. You will be happier still if people just leave you alone for a while. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

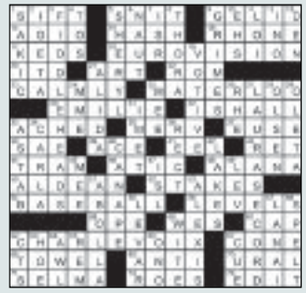
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. ___ (Answer to "Where's Vancouver?")
5. Popular cartoon-like icon in digital communication
10. Dijon's country, to the IOC
13. "That hurts!"
14. Fruit type
15. Vancouver band, __ The Whale
16. Insect nests
17. Gradual loudness increase in music, for short
18. Purplish
19. Toronto: Yonge Street splits this Avenue into East and West
21. "The Newlywed Game" host Bob
23. "Yuck!"
24. Tune line
25. "__ __ Replay" by Rihanna
28. "Hee __"
29. "Disaster __" on HGTV Canada
33. Over-fed = ___ lot
34. Actress Debi
36. Clark Gable film setting
37. Seeded
38. Hawaiian Crow
39. 'Gen' finisher (Basic)
40. Baby branch
41. 'The King', in Spanish: 2 wds.
42. Lounge around
43. Building extension
45. 'Vigor' suffix
46. Quebec, 'La __ Province'
47. Norwegian kings
49. Zoologist's foot
50. "When I'm with You" Canadian band
53. Receive warmly
57. Ping-__
58. Western flick
60. Ancient author
61. House's gutter locale
62. Arctic boat
63. Peel
64. Sarcastic
65. Onion kins
66. Dash

Down
1. Particles
2. Night: French
3. Alphabet sequence
4. Coast Salish actor (b.1899 - d.1981) from North Vancouver who co-starred with Clint Eastwood in #8-Down: 3 wds.
5. Host an event
6. Seas: French
7. Flamenco exclamation!
8. "The Outlaw __ __" (1976)
9. Obtain
10. Human/goat forest deity
11. Canadian star Mr. Moranis
12. Tangy quaffs
15. NASA's Kepler: 2 wds.
20. Whopper
22. Tender
24. Statue of Liberty poet, Emma __ (b.1849 - d.1887)
25. Macaroni
26. "Liquid Dreams" TV-created band
27. ___ stock (Recently-arrived goods)
28. Toronto attraction, Hockey __ __ __
30. Festive song
31. Canadian singer/pianist Diana
32. Room: French
34. Ms. West
35. Jamie Foxx movie
44. Gladiator's 41
46. "The Fresh Prince of __-Air"
48. Run __ of (Conflict)
49. Benefits
50. Disgorge
51. Rime
52. Greenly admire
53. Tired
54. Shape sort
55. Ms. Sorvino
56. Paradise
59. Affiliation

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	1	6	3			8		
	9			4		2		
	4		7		6			
			4				7	
3			5		7			6
	5				8			
			2		9		8	
		5		3			9	
		4			5	7	1	

Yesterday's Sudoku

2	4	1	3	9	7	6	8	5
6	8	7	1	4	5	9	2	3
3	9	5	8	6	2	4	1	7
1	2	6	9	5	3	7	4	8
4	3	9	7	2	8	1	5	6
5	7	8	6	1	4	2	3	9
7	1	2	5	3	6	8	9	4
9	6	3	4	8	1	5	7	2
8	5	4	2	7	9	3	6	1

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